

Chefs A' Field

Culinary Adventures That Begin on the Farm



WARM KABOCHA SQUASH SALAD WITH DANDELION, BACON, RONCAL & PECANS

BY SUZANNE GOIN OF LUCQUES & AOC RESTAURANTS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium kabocha squash, about 1 3/4 pound
- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon thyme leaves
- 1/2 cup pecan halves
- 2/3 pound slab apple-smoked bacon
- 3 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- 8 ounces young dandelion greens, cleaned
- 1/4 cup sliced shallots
- 1/4 pound hunk roncal
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Preheat the oven to 475F. Cut the squash in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Place the squash cut side down on a cutting board and use a sharp knife to remove the peel. Slice the squash lengthwise into 1/2 inch thick wedges.

Toss the squash with 1/4 cup olive oil, 2 teaspoons salt, some freshly ground black pepper and the thyme. Place the squash flat on a baking sheet and roast in the oven about 20 minutes, until tender when pierced.

Turn the oven down to 375F.

Spread the pecans on a baking sheet and toast about 10 minutes, stirring once or twice until they smell nutty. Toss with a teaspoon olive oil and a pinch of salt.

Cut the bacon into 3/8 inch thick slices and stack them on top of each other in two piles, then cut the bacon crosswise into 3/8 inch "lardons." They should be nice, even-sided rectangular shapes.

In a small bowl, whisk together the sherry vinegar, 2 tablespoons olive oil, and 1/4 teaspoon salt.

Place the dandelion greens in a large salad bowl.

Heat a large sauté pan over high heat for 1 minute. Add the bacon and cook, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes, until the bacon just begins to brown, but is still tender and chewy. Discard all but 2 tablespoons of the fat from the pan. Lower the heat to medium, add the shallots and toss to combine. Remove from the heat and swirl in the vinaigrette to warm it. Add the warm squash and the contents of the pan to the dandelion greens. Season with 1/4 teaspoon salt and a pinch of pepper and toss gently to dress the salad. Taste for seasoning.

On The Plate

Arrange half the salad on a large platter. Use a vegetable peeler to shave some roncal over the salad and sprinkle over half the nuts. Top with the remaining salad, some more shavings of cheese, and the rest of the nuts.

Courtesy of Chefs A' Field.

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